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Prepared by Harold Bush-Brown

THE DUXBURY LIBRARY

(The following report was prepared by the Library Study Committee --Ed.)

A DOUBLE OPPORTUNITY

Today we have a library building nearly 60 years old, crammed with books and with practically no space for the readers and staff. Tables and chairs are at a premium. Facilities are inadequate, obsolete or missing. This year a Federal grant and two bequests make an unusual combination for both modernizing the library and reducing its construction cost.

An element in the modern library which differs from the past is the separate area for children. For Duxbury, this is clearly shown on the architect's plans as an extension to the rear towards the south at ground level. The plans are on view at the Library and will be shown in the Library brochure soon to be distributed. To gain an idea of what such a children's wing can mean, one has only to visit the neighboring libraries in Kingston and Plymouth to see how recent alterations have been designed to meet this need. The importance of this function in all contemporary libraries is further well demonstrated in such libraries as those of Quincy, Canton and Milton and Lincoln where, not only is there a separate area for children, but a separate entrance direct from outdoors, as will be the case in Duxbury.

In one respect Duxbury is unique. The library is on the grounds and close to Duxbury's three schools, and when the new Middle School is built on the Wright Estate, it will be in the center of the school complex, within easy walking distance of all four.

In the matter of financing, here again Duxbury is fortunate in having the assurance that funds will be given to pay for the children's wing in the new building. Forty thousand dollars has been allocated for this purpose from the H.C. Grafton Trust, money left to be expended for the benefit of the town by Col. H.J. Grafton, Jr.

Another new element in the modern library is the "multi-purpose room for meeting, viewing and listening" included as a minimum standard by the American Library Association in 1956. Alice M. Cahill of the Division of Library Extension, Mass. Dept. of Education in her 1963 report on the deficiencies and needs of the Duxbury Library concurred with the above by recommending meeting room facilities, story hours, films, art exhibits and special projects.

In 1889, when Georgianna B. and George W. Wright conveyed the property to the Trustees, they appended to the deed an explanation of intent: "It is our wish that the Trustees shall arrange for the best interests of the citizens of the Town of Duxbury, favoring social gatherings, such as meetings of the Rural So., Sewing Circles, Reading Clubs and those tending to the education and elevation of our Town's people." (See Dorothy Wentworth's article in the Clipper of Jan. 26, 1967.) One does not hear much about sewing circles these days and the Rural Society now has a fine new home of its own; but there are many groups and individuals with special interests who will find an enlarged library a welcome source of inspiration. Those whose avocation may be in the field of the natural sciences, conservation, oceanography, travel, photography, bird watching, music and art. Among the groups showing active interest in the library high on the list are the garden clubs. There

is no place in Duxbury suitable for traveling exhibitions or even local exhibitions if the exhibits are to be on view longer than two or three days and are to be well lighted and well displayed. At meetings on the library, the question has been asked, "Why can't we have a music file of records as in some other libraries?"

In all the towns visited by members of the Study Committee where a fully developed up-to-date project has been undertaken, there is included a meeting room and, in most cases, an exhibition space. Examples: Canton, Milton, Quincy, Sandwich, Putterham in Brookline, Hingham and Millis. (This last, a small library now under construction, was designed by Morehouse, Chesley & Thomas architects for the Duxbury Library.)

In the plans for the proposed expansion, the above suggestions and demands can be fulfilled by the utilization of the west room and even on occasion, the central rotunda of the existing building.

Fortunately for Duxbury, through the generosity of one of Duxbury's public spirited citizens, Mrs. H.C. Bumpus, funds have been promised to help towards the realization of just these community needs.

A library should be a place where people of all ages are free to go to read, study, browse through shelves of books and magazines, find chairs to sit on and tables on which to write, in short, a place favorable to one's search for ideas and inspiration recorded on the printed page.

By providing sufficient, well-lighted, quiet and comfortable space; and modern adequate facilities, our library can do much to serve the community. That is what your committee is confident will be achieved if plans, which are the result of almost two years of study, are approved.

The plans for the Duxbury Free Library have been approved by the Massachusetts Division of Library Extension for a Federal grant of \$60,000 subject to approval by the town. To have a modern adequate library comparable with those in other towns, vote YES at the annual Town Meeting, March 11.